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Ohio5 Government Documents

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Ohio5 Government Documents

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The **CONSORT Colleges**, (**Denison University**, **Kenyon College**, **Ohio Wesleyan University**, and **The College of Wooster**) are all **Federal Depository** libraries. The documents departments of these institutions have a long history of cooperation. In 1983 the **CONSORT** colleges' documents departments, along with **Otterbein College**, developed a **Union List** of item selections. This union list was updated each year between 1983 and 1991 during the annual depository update cycle. Cooperative collection development began during this period in an informal and uncoordinated manner as documents personnel at each institution adjusted their selections after consideration of the selections at other institutions.

The **Five Colleges of Ohio** (**CONSORT** schools outlined above plus **Oberlin College**) consortium was founded in 1995 with the assistance of the **Mellon Foundation**. The initial goals of the consortium were to "consolidate library activities using electronic and other means to achieve significant savings" and to "develop specific programs and strategies to improve educational effectiveness and gain financial efficiencies by addressing cost-saving opportunities in administrative areas of their budgets." (http://www2.kenyon.edu/Ohio5/press_release.html)

The **Government Documents Subcommittee** of the **Library Committee** developed specific proposals in the area of acquisitions and collection development for federal publications. The group began by updating the existing **Union List** of Item selections and establishing some basic tenets relating to documents acquisition

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analyzed our **JSTOR** holdings with the goal of retaining one archival print copy within the consortium. We have continued to derive benefits from our database subscriptions and our consortial borrowing program flourishes. There is renewed interest in moving towards a more formal cooperative collection development program within **CTW**. **Ed, Doris** and I will meet soon to discuss what direction we might take. We will certainly look at some of the Ohio initiatives funded by the **Mellon** grant and consider whether a program targeting specific types of materials would serve us well. The desire to cooperate has existed within **CTW** since the consortium was established. Our task now is to build on our early efforts and construct a program that will work well for us.

and collection development. The following list quotes and/or synthesizes those basic tenets.

1. All libraries will select titles on the **Basic Collection** list.
2. The **Serial Set**, as the heart of depository collections, will need to be retained by most libraries.
3. All item numbers other than those for the **Serial Set** and the **Basic Collection** will be reviewed for usefulness to the curriculum and the local community.
4. Some item numbers will be of marginal value to all libraries but will be important enough to require selection by one or more institutions. This will require written agreements for selection, retention, and housing between the institutions.
5. Some currently selected item numbers will not be needed by any of the libraries. These should be de-selected.
6. Item numbers not currently selected that would be a valuable addition to the collection of either individual institutions or to the consortium as a whole will be added.

Review of item selections showed approximately two third of all items were selected by multiple libraries. A zero based review of item selections (a review where every item available to be selected is considered, whether it is currently selected or not) began in 1995 with congressional publications. The availability of congressional documents in either paper or microfiche format created an additional decision point. Each item number was evaluated for relevance to the curriculum and/or the local community and ranked accordingly.

The ranking system established for the congressional materials consisted of the following choices:

- 1 = Must have in the current format
- 2 = Not critical to the local collection, would like to keep
- 3 = Marginal value to local collection, will drop or keep as needed by consortium
- 4 = Not needed in local collection, should drop. May be needed in consortium.
- 5 = Not necessary to have within the consortium
- 6 = Volunteers to change current format
- 7 = Volunteers to drop item

At the beginning of the review, **The Five Colleges of Ohio** was a new consortium and the libraries involved were new to **OhioLINK**.

There was little experience with the benefits of direct patron request for materials and the state-wide delivery system for library materials. Given these circumstances members of the group were pleased with the results of the review of Congressional materials. At that time there were 54 active House and Senate committees. Print or microfiche options resulted in a total of 104 different item numbers. After the ranked review, 14 items were dropped and an additional 10 were converted from paper to microfiche format.

As expected from the basic tenets outlined above, very little change was evidenced in the selection of materials that are part of the **Serial Set**. For non-congressional materials only four ranks were used.

- 1 = Must keep — critical to the local collection
- 2 = Would like to keep but not critical to the local collection
- 3 = Willing to drop if available elsewhere in the consortium
- 4 = Not necessary to have within the consortium

As review of the agency selections progressed, the urgency to reduce the cataloging burden across the consortium increased. Some changes in collection development patterns continued to develop but pressure to complete the review and make cataloging assignments gradually moved the focus away from a comprehensive reassessment of item selections.

Cataloging

As previously alluded to, the four **CONSORT** schools also cooperate regarding cataloging of government documents. For those libraries sharing the **CONSORT** catalog, cataloging assignments were made at the same time the collection review was undertaken. Responsibilities for cataloging items received by more than one school are divided by call number range. Items received by only one school are cataloged by that school, regardless of call number. Union lists are maintained and updated regularly, and cataloging is performed using uniform guidelines established and maintained by the schools as a group.

Development and successful implementation of cooperative cataloging procedures has

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freed staff time to take on other projects such as the **Historical Documents Cataloging Project** (more project information available at: http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/proceedings/00pro6.html) and the implementation of **Marcive's Documents Without Shelves** service. While most records received from **Marcive** go into the catalog untouched, duplicate records are flagged and examined (again through dividing up **SuDoc** ranges) in order to preserve local information and reduce patron confusion. Perhaps one of the most valuable indirect benefits of the development of cooperative cataloging procedures has been the development of a level of comfort with a system for division of labor, which the group has been able to apply to multiple projects.

War of the Rebellion & Serial Set Inventories

One of the goals of cooperative collection development is to consolidate collections. For instance, do we really need four sets of **Congressional Serial Sets** among the four **CONSORT** schools? Are there duplicate volumes? If there are, will they be able to fill in the gaps of the schools that have missing volumes? What is the condition of each **Serial Set** volume? To find the answers to these questions, we decided to conduct inventories of our **Serial Set** collections.

Ellen Conrad, former coordinator of the **Original and Historical Cataloging Project** of the **Five Colleges of Ohio**, first started the **War of Rebellion** inventory as a test case. She created a spreadsheet that lists all the **War of the Rebellion** volumes. She indicated holdings of each school by a condition number, from 1 to 4. One indicates that the volume is in excellent condition and is like new, while 4 means that the item is in poor condition, and has loose or damaged binding, as well as damaged text. The inventory revealed that the duplicate sets at **Denison** and **Kenyon** were able to supply volumes missing at **Ohio Wesleyan** and **Wooster**, thus creating 4 full sets in **CONSORT**.

The **War of the Rebellion** inventory worked out very well and served as a test case of how to proceed with the **Serial Set** inventory. At our first **Collection Development Taskforce** meeting held on November 27, 2001, we decided to complete our inventory of the **Serial Set** from 1789 through the 104th Congress. We used the same numbering system developed for the **War of the Rebellion** project to determine the condition of each volume in the **Serial Set**. Spreadsheets were sent to each school to record their holdings. When the inventory is complete, the spreadsheets will be converted into HTML files and posted on the Web, and the group is investigating contributing results to the national survey.

Establishing a Remotely Stored Consortial Collection of Record

The consortium, in 2000, established a storage facility in the old Public Library building in Newark, Ohio. In 2002 the **Subcommittee** began a project whose ultimate goal was to establish a "collection of record" for little-used documents to be housed at this facility. Each

school in the consortium would assess its collection in the area under scrutiny, utilizing the condition criteria developed for the **War of the Rebellion** and the **Serial Set** projects. The best copy of each item would be sent to the Newark facility. Creation of such a collection would have several benefits. It would allow participating schools to weed local collections and free up much needed shelf space while ensuring ongoing access, and it would also create a single collection that could become the focus of preservation efforts, a much more efficient use of preservation time and dollars.

The **Subcommittee** decided to use the publications of the **Federal Security Agency** as a test to assess the process itself as well as outcomes. This agency was established in 1939, dissolved in 1953, and its components transferred to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The process decided upon for this project was very similar to the one used for the **Serial Set** inventory: each school would add holdings and condition statements to a master file which would work its way around the schools. The project is still in this assessment phase: at least one school has discovered that a good number of its holdings in this area were at one point integrated into the general collection: identifying them is proving to be time consuming. However, the **Subcommittee** remains optimistic that this approach, while not a quick fix, will provide over time a consortial collection that is in better condition, more complete and more accessible than could be managed on an individual basis.

Cooperative Agreements

In addition to these projects the four **CONSORT** schools entered into three significant agreements regarding the collection and retention of materials:

Kenyon will keep NOAA weather charts CDs; **Denison** will keep NASA Magellan CDs.

Denison maintains the archives of the **Five Colleges Government Documents Sub-Committee**.

Denison agreed to be the map library of record for **CONSORT**.

Access

A final tool that assists with collection development and access is the **OhioLINK** courier system that transports not only patron-requested library materials, but also other documents among the **Consort** schools. The system can be used for quick and easy delivery directly to a staff member of fragile materials whose use needs to be mediated and in-house, or another library's copy of materials that have been lost locally and which can then be duplicated as a replacement for that local collection as allowed by copyright laws. The courier system allows patrons and staff to receive materials from the consortial storage facility, creating part of the support structure for efforts such as the best agency copy project.

Concluding Thoughts

The relatively modest inter-library collection development cooperation that began in 1983 has evolved into an active consortially-based set of programs. As consortial cooperation has matured, attention has turned to the future. It has been several years since the initial zero based item review, and the evolution of the **Federal Depository Library Program** is creating a very different collection development universe for government documents. The move to a more electronic program brings up fundamental collection development questions for depositories: what does it mean to select an electronic item? What role does a library catalog play in the electronic age? What should be selected in paper, providing local long-term access, or in electronic format, over which libraries have considerably less local control? Additionally, in a consortium with a high level of cooperation and access to member collections, what items should each library select? Over the next several years the **Government Documents Subcommittee** of the **Five Colleges of Ohio** will build on our history of cooperation, our developed experience, and our tools to work through these questions together and as a group complete another zero based item review. As we look to the future it is our goal to keep refining our tools and methods, and to instill a consortial expectation that government documents collection development is a fluid enterprise that requires regular attention.

Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

Preconferences and Vendor Showcase

Main Conference

2004	3 November	4-6 November
2005	2 November	3-5 November
2006	8 November	9-11 November
2007	7 November	8-10 November
2008	5 November	6-8 November
2009	4 November	5-7 November
2010	3 November	4-6 November